

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 08SANJOSE586, COSTA RICA REITERATES NEED FOR IMMEDIATE MARITIME

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08SANJOSE586**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">08SANJOSE586</a>	<a href="#">2008-07-10 12:50</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy San Jose</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasDestacadas/Investigacion2702320.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2702325.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotaPrincipal/Investigacion2702324.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2702326.aspx>  
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-03-06/Investigacion/NotasSecundarias/Investigacion2702327.aspx>

VZCZCXYZ0000  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHSJ #0586 1921250  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 101250Z JUL 08  
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9924  
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE  
RUEABND/DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMIN HQ WASHINGTON DC  
RUMIAGH/COMJTF-B SIMS SOTO CANO HO  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 000586

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHAT/CEN, WHA/PPC, INL/LP, AND PM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/09/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [PINS](#) [SNAR](#) [CS](#)

SUBJECT: COSTA RICA REITERATES NEED FOR IMMEDIATE MARITIME  
INTERDICTION ASSISTANCE, SPELLS OUT OTHER PRIORITIES

REF: SAN JOSE 530

Classified By: DCM Peter M. Brennan for reason 1.4 (b).

¶1. (C) On July 1, during the Ambassador's formal courtesy call with her, Minister of Public Security Janina Del Vecchio reiterated what she had told us on June 12 meeting (Reftel): Costa Rica needs immediate maritime interdiction assistance to help combat drug trafficking in littoral waters. She asked that we commit as much of the Merida Initiative funding to help fix the Costa Rican Coast Guard (SNGC) as possible. Del Vecchio emphasized that what the SNGC needed most are maritime interceptors that could both catch "go-fast" drug runners as well as board them. She acknowledged that her current SNGC fleet was inadequate for either mission.

¶2. (C) Speaking more broadly on security issues, Del Vecchio shared with us that President Oscar Arias had instructed her to obtain as much international assistance as possible to help address Costa Rica's deteriorating domestic security problems, which are directly linked to the effects of narcotrafficking throughout Costa Rican territory. She relayed that Arias told her that the GOCR's budget was already under a lot of pressure due to increased fuel and food prices and that there was little room in the budget to increase current levels of security spending.

¶3. (C) Del Vecchio told us that after the SNGC, her top priority was to professionalize the police and to ensure that they were properly equipped. The establishment of a new police academy was, she highlighted, an important part of reforming the Costa Rican police. (NOTE: Post has assisted the GOCR on this issue in an advising role, especially through our New Mexico State Partnership Program. END NOTE.) She said the police needed more medium-size trucks or SUVs that could be used off-road (4X4s) and more mobile command posts (bus-size type of mobile command and control units, they currently have just one) to deal with problems outside of the capital such as major drug busts or reacting to natural disasters. She confirmed to us that Costa Rica would be receiving 200 small patrol cars from China, though she did not have a time frame for their delivery.

¶4. (C) In a separate courtesy call with Vice-President and Minister of Justice Laura Chinchilla on July 2, Chinchilla told the Ambassador that Costa Rica was very pleased that the Merida Initiative had passed. The GOCR was confident this would help address security needs. Chinchilla also seemed interested in developing a strategic security plan for Costa Rica with USG help. We are exploring various options on how to proceed, including a seminar led by a team from the National Defense University's Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, perhaps as early as next month.

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COMMENT  
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¶5. (SBU) Regarding the types of maritime interceptors that Minister Del Vecchio requested, Post recommends that as part of the Merida Initiative the USG purchase 33-foot SPE-LE "Safe" boats. The USCG uses these types of boats for both interception and boarding of drug running "go-fasts" and are the desired choice for the SNGC. Earlier this year, a USCG survey team visited Costa Rica and concurred with Post's assessment. The advantage with this type of interceptor is that it has a foam-filled hull, similar to inflatables but without the risk of being punctured and losing air, to minimize any damage made during boarding operations. The rigid-hull type of design, such as those used for Enduring Friendship, can cause damage to both the boarding vessel and the vessel being boarded.  
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